Getting Better

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by WordsAblaze

Summary

Jack briefly looks confused, before he connects the dots that have been staring him right in the face for years. “You really are a lost cause.”

Several years ago, Will might have flinched at the words. But now, meeting Jack’s alarmed gaze with wholly unveiled anger, he just smiles. “I’m not sure whether it’s more of an insult to you or me that you thought any differently.”

“I believe it’s largely an insult to me,” Hannibal says, materialising from somewhere behind Will.

Notes

heads up that i made jack worse because i needed a bad guy, sorry not sorry >:)

day 31 prompts used: setbacks

See the end of the work for more notes

“I’m being followed,” Will tells Hannibal on a Wednesday evening.

Hannibal looks up from his desk with a frown, pencil hovering midair as he considers the words. “Are you certain?”

Will raises an eyebrow at him. “I wouldn’t have mentioned it if I wasn’t.”

That’s clearly not an answer Hannibal is happy with, because he abandons his sketch entirely and walks over to Will, pulling him close, arms wrapped around his waist and the back of his head. Will melts into the touch with a soft hum, as he often does when they embrace after a long day, and Hannibal pulls back just before he becomes entirely boneless.

“I would not have thought of you any less had you come to me with even the most unlikely of suspicions, Will.” Hannibal says gently, firmly.

With a sigh, Will shrugs. “I’m sorry. I know that. I was just afraid…”

“That your mind was merely playing tricks on you once again?” Hannibal finishes, but not unkindly. Before Will can reply, Hannibal smiles at him, running a hand through his hair. “The apology is mine if I have made you feel as though you cannot trust me with your unpolished concerns. In this case, however, you may be right. It seems we have become a touch too comfortable here.”

Will almost wants to argue that there should be no such thing, that they deserve to be as comfortable as their hearts desire after everything they’ve gone through, but the less bitter, more rational part of his brain knows Hannibal is right. It’s not the first time they’ve had to relocate, and nor will it be the last; there’s no reason to consider this as anything but a minor setback in the grand scheme of the rest of their lives.

“I’m… fairly certain it was Jack,” he admits.

Hannibal stares at him for a moment, then sighs. “Then we must be prepared for him.”

And they try to be.

They try, but neither of them had been expecting Jack to limbo dance under the law and sneak up on Will in broad daylight, a hand clamping over Will’s mouth where he’d knelt down to pick up the branch one of their dogs had just fetched.

Will gasps as he topples backwards, his arms rising to dislodge the one around his neck, but that only leads him to inhale what he knows from uncomfortable experience is chloroform, and he can do little more than hope Jack leaves the dogs alone before he loses track of the world.

When the world returns to him, he’s in a different part of it. Specifically, he’s in what seems like a garage or storage room of some sort. His head throbs, and he groans, squeezing his eyes shut as the pain momentarily intensifies.

“You look well,” Jack says.

Will doesn't immediately open his eyes, first taking note of the handcuffs around his wrists and the feel of a cold, metal table underneath his arms. He laughs at the image of Jack setting up a mock interrogation room for him, then grins when the other man promptly bangs a fist on the table in his impatience.

“I’m not sure I can say the same for you,” Will drawls.

Jack’s eyes narrow as he takes a seat in the chair on the other side of the table. “You won’t be able to fool me twice, Will.”

“You quit the FBI,” Will says bluntly, his grin widening when Jack freezes, taking that reaction as confirmation. “You can’t touch us here.”

Recognising that he’s just been tricked, Jack scowls at him. “Why would you betray us all, Will?”

“All that stalking and you still don’t know?” Will asks, raising his eyebrows in mock-surprise. In truth, it’s entirely *unsurprising* that Jack wouldn’t be able to understand the way he and Hannibal are irrevocably conjoined, but that’s not a struggle unique to him.

He must have at least guessed, though, because he doesn’t reply to that, and goes so far as to lean back, folding his arms. “My condolences for your latest strays.”

Will’s grin drops, and he sits up straighter. “You hurt them?”

“You really haven’t changed all that much,” Jack scoffs, avoiding the question.

There’s a strange look in Jack’s eyes, a dark shade of desperation, and Will genuinely can’t make out whether or not he’d resort to harming animals to get his way. For that reason, he can’t help wondering how badly their dogs have been hurt and finds himself foolishly lunging towards Jack in his grief, hissing in frustration when the handcuffs jerk him backwards, connected to the centre of the table as they would be in a genuine interrogation room.

“What do you want, Jack?” Will asks, rolling his wrists as he takes his seat again.

“Answers,” Jack replies, then leans in closer, propping his arms on the table. “And justice.”

Will rolls his eyes, because that’s exactly what he’d expected him to say. “And you decided that drugging and kidnapping someone you suspect to be a cannibal was the best way to achieve your goals?”

“You’re not a cannibal, Will,” Jack snaps, “but you are protecting one.”

Blinking slowly, Will cocks his head to the right. “You sound awfully certain of that.”

Jack briefly looks confused, before he connects the dots that have been staring him right in the face for years. “You really are a lost cause.”

Several years ago, Will might have flinched at the words. But now, meeting Jack's alarmed gaze with wholly unveiled anger, he just smiles. "I'm not sure whether it's more of an insult to you or me that you thought any differently."

"I believe it's largely an insult to *me* ," Hannibal says, materialising from somewhere behind Will.

It's almost comedic, the way Jack is on his feet within seconds. Hannibal clicks his tongue, unfazed, placing a hand on Will's shoulder alongside placing a gun—Jack's gun, which he clearly hadn't noticed being stolen—on the table between them. After a moment of tense silence, Jack reluctantly takes his seat again, and Hannibal squeezes Will's shoulder as a means of reassurance.

"All that stalking and you still don't know how to identify a tail?" Will asks as he leans back into Hannibal's presence.

Before Jack can reply, Hannibal leans down and uses two fingers to angle Will's face upwards and little to the right, pressing their mouths together in a kiss that deepens until their lungs force them to separate. Only then does he turn back to Jack with a smug smile. "Hello, Jack."

"Doctor Lecter," Jack replies stiffly, his gaze flickering between the two of them. Will makes a show of licking his lips as he grins, almost certain Hannibal will be doing the same behind him, just to make their audience even more uncomfortable than he already is.

"I hope you settled your outstanding affairs before you travelled across the globe just to prove yourself wrong," Hannibal says calmly.

"And to hurt our dogs," Will mutters.

Hannibal's grip tightens on Will's shoulder. His expression must have darkened, because Jack stands once again, stepping backwards. "I only gave them sleeping pills. They'll be fine."

"The same way you considered it *fine* forcing my husband to inhale toxic chemicals?" Hannibal asks, and Will has to stifle a laugh when Jack blanches, his eyes dropping to their hands, where he finds identical black bands on each of their ring fingers.

"Now, now, darling, we mustn't forget that you've done the same to me in the past," Will murmurs, staring at Jack but very clearly addressing Hannibal.

Hannibal hums in acknowledgement. "I suppose we can forgive Jack for that particular misconception," he agrees. Will feels him shift, and his other hand also settles on Will's other shoulder before he continues. "I'm afraid the same forgiveness cannot be granted for disrupting our peace, or tainting the places we hold dear."

Jack visibly swallows. "You're *hurting* people."

Will laughs, the handcuffs rattling as he does so. He knows Hannibal narrows in on the sound, because Jack takes another step back, and has the decency to look apologetic when

Hannibal leans over Will to carefully inspect the indentations on his wrists, one of which is actually slowly oozing red from where he'd forced the metal against his skin in his earlier anger.

"You're *hurting* Will," Hannibal counters, his voice low and cold and unforgiving.

"I could still have you both arrested," Jack snarls, bravely—stupidly, really—deciding to ignore the implicit threat in Hannibal's tone.

Will smirks as he lets his own gaze darken, allowing Jack the time to realise that the special agent he'd once known has long since ceased to exist. "And we could have you *eaten* ."

End Notes

and so the series is complete !! happy spooky day <3

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